

In the Claims:

Please add new claims 14 to 25 and cancel without prejudice claims 1 to 13:

Claims 1 to 13.(canceled)

14.(new) An electronic monitoring circuit for monitoring one of at least two series-connected capacitor units in an intermediate circuit in order to detect short-circuiting of said one of said capacitor units, said monitoring circuit (16) comprising

means for deriving a reference voltage (14) from an intermediate-circuit voltage (L(+),L(-)) applied across said at least two series-connected capacitor units (1, 2);

means for generating a control signal consisting of a voltage difference between said reference voltage (14) and a junction voltage at a junction (13) between two of said capacitor units (1, 2); and

means for generating an error signal when said control signal falls below or exceeds an activation threshold voltage thus indicating that said one of said capacitor units (1,2) has been short-circuited.

15.(new) The monitoring circuit as defined in claim 14, wherein said means for deriving said reference voltage (14) comprises a plurality of series-connected resistors (3,4) and wherein said plurality of said series-connected resistors (3,4) is connected in parallel with said at least two series-connected capacitor units

(1,2).

16.(new) The monitoring circuit as defined in claim 14, wherein said means for generating said error signal when said voltage difference falls below or exceeds said activation threshold voltage comprises a zener diode (15) and said activation threshold voltage corresponds to a breakdown voltage of said zener diode.

17.(new) The monitoring circuit as defined in claim 14, wherein said error signal corresponds to an error signal voltage and said error signal voltage is based on a freely selectable ground potential.

18.(new) The monitoring circuit as defined in claim 14, wherein said means for generating the error signal comprises a light-emitting diode (17) and a light-sensitive transistor (18) and said light-emitting diode (17) and light-sensitive transistor (18) are arranged to generate said error signal from said voltage difference when said voltage difference is applied to said light-emitting diode.

19.(new) The monitoring circuit as defined in claim 14, wherein said means for generating said error signal comprises a current-voltage converter and said current-voltage converter generates an error signal voltage directly from a current flowing due to voltage asymmetry produced with an error occurs.

20.(new) The monitoring circuit as defined in claim 17, wherein said current flowing due to said voltage asymmetry when said error occurs is limited by a resistor chain.

21.(new) The monitoring circuit as defined in claim 20, wherein respective intermediate-circuit capacitor units correspond to corresponding parts of said resistor chain, each of said parts consisting of at least one chain resistor, and respective ratios of capacitance of said respective intermediate-circuit capacitor units to resistance of said corresponding parts of said resistor chain are substantially the same for all resistor-chain-part-capacitor pairs.

22.(new) The monitoring circuit as defined in claim 20, wherein each of said parts of said resistor chain consists of a single chain resistor.

23.(new) The monitoring circuit as defined in claim 14, wherein each of said capacitor units consists of a capacitor.

24.(new) The monitoring circuit as defined in claim 14, wherein each of said capacitor units consists of a plurality of capacitors connected in series and/or parallel with each other.

25.(new) The monitoring circuit as defined in claim 14, wherein each of said capacitor units have the same capacitance.